Approved for Release: 2018/10/01 C06626843

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WHH
E.O. 12356

TELEGRAM

INDICATE
☐ COLLECT
☐ CHARGE TO

FROM	CLASSIFICATION
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES	CONFIDENTIAL

12065:
E.O. [redacted]:
TAGS: SHUM AR
SUBJECT: MFA PROBE ON U.S. RESPONSE TO TIMERMAN RELEASE

ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY

~~INFO~~ ~~CCCX~~ ~~AMEMBASSY [redacted]~~

CONFIDENTIAL BUENOS AIRES ~~2209~~ 2277

1. (C - Entire Text).

AMB
DCM
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USICA
DAO
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CHRON

2. Following up an informal approach made at social occasion 3-20 North American Affairs Director at Foreign Affairs Ministry (Espeche Gil) asked Poloff today 3-22 to come to Ministry as soon as possible to discuss the Jacobo Timerman case.

3. Espeche Gil raised this question: What would be the attitude of the United States to Timerman's release -- and, more specifically, how would elements of the U.S.G. respond to this event? Press attitudes are important, Espeche Gil said, but he needs to know more about what might happen in the Department of State, other offices of the Executive branch of government and in the Congress as response to Timerman's release.

DRAFTED BY:	DRAFTING DATE	TEL. EXT.	CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY:
POLCOUNS:WHHallman:jk	3/22/79	278	DCM:MChapin

CLEARANCES:

CONFIDENTIAL
CLASSIFICATION

50153-101

OPTIONAL FORM 153
(Formerly FS-413)
January 1975
Dept. of State

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4. Emboff replied that Timerman's release would remove an irritant and create optimism about the Argentine government's intentions but that it also might pass as a step the government should have taken months ago as an act of elemental fairness. Emboff said also that terms of his release would be important, with complete freedom to come and go as he pleases -- to travel abroad as would any Argentine citizen -- being the only course that would get any accolades. Timerman's expulsion -- another course which Espeche Gil admitted was possible -- would be considered an unsatisfactory adjustment of a large injustice.

5. Espeche Gil asked specifically about effects of Timerman's accepting Columbia University invitation (State 054956 and Buenos Aires 1984). Emboff said Timerman's acceptance and travel to New York would for sure give evidence of his unconditional liberty -- assuming of course he was able to return to Argentina should he choose. Conversation then went along lines of what Timerman himself might want or do upon his release -- about which it was useless to speculate. Only Timerman himself could answer questions about activities he would propose, presumably only after the terms of his release had been discussed in detail

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with GOA authorities.

6. Conversation ended with agreement to meet again once Embassy had clearer picture of "the U.S. response."

7. COMMENT. From several sources we hear that Timerman's release is being seriously discussed within GOA. Timerman's brother here has told us he is encouraged regarding possibilities of Jacobo's release. Foreign Minister Pastor is reported to have been asked about Timerman during his visits to Venezuela and Brazil, and in any event it is the Foreign Ministry that feels the blast of opinion outside Argentina -- all insistent Timerman be freed. Foreign Ministry appears to be fishing for arguments to favor Timerman's release, among which some notable (preferably even tangible) U.S. act of praise would weigh heavily.

8. ACTION REQUESTED. We recommend no "price" be offered for Timerman's release, but -- assuming his release is unconditional -- it seems appropriate to us that the Department spokesman note the release as "encouraging" and "creating optimism about the Argentine Government's intentions toward human rights violations which have taken place in that country." Department's views requested.

9. Septel responds to State 69331 concerning possibility of a Timerman hunger strike.

CASTRO RME

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